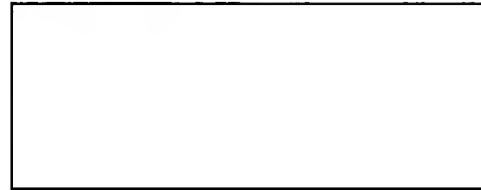


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7 July 1972

Central Intelligence Bulletin

CONTENTS

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PHILIPPINES: Marcos reacts to furor over agreements
with US.

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25X1

Next 8 Page(s) In Document Exempt

PHILIPPINES: PRESIDENT MARCOS HAS INDICATED THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO DE-ESCALATE THE PUBLIC FUROR HE RECENTLY STIRRED UP OVER THE RENEGOTIATION OF MILITARY AND ECONOMIC AGREEMENTS WITH THE US.

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MARCOS TOLD THE US AMBASSADOR ON 5 JULY THAT, DESPITE INFLAMMATORY PRESS STORIES CALLING FOR A DRASTIC REALIGNMENT OF US-PHILIPPINE TREATY RELATIONSHIPS, HE PERSONALLY DID NOT WANT MAJOR CHANGES IN THE EXISTING CLOSE TIES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. HE SUGGESTED THAT BOTH SIDES SHOULD NAME TOP-LEVEL NEGOTIATING PANELS IN DECEMBER WITH THE EXPECTATION THAT FINAL DECISIONS WOULD BE REACHED SOME TIME IN FEBRUARY OR MARCH OF 1973. INDICATIVE OF MARCOS' DESIRE TO TONE DOWN THE US BASE AGREEMENTS AS A PUBLIC ISSUE WAS HIS ANNOUNCEMENT ON 4 JULY THAT THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING TODAY, WHICH WAS TO HAVE DISCUSSED PHILIPPINE STRATEGY FOR NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE US, WOULD INSTEAD EXAMINE THE FUTURE OF THE SOUTHEAST ASIA TREATY ORGANIZATION.

MARCOS FIRST CALLED FOR RENEGOTIATION OF US ECONOMIC AND MILITARY TREATIES WITH THE PHILIPPINES IN EARLY JUNE IN AN EFFORT TO DIVERT PUBLIC ATTENTION FROM HIS SHADY DOMESTIC POLITICAL TACTICS. THIS PLOY SUCCEEDED SO WELL, HOWEVER, THAT HE MAY NOW FIND IT DIFFICULT TO BACK OFF QUICKLY. MOREOVER, HIS ABILITY TO DEFLATE THIS ISSUE MAY BE COMPLICATED BY OPPOSITION LEADER SENATOR AQUINO'S SWEEPING CRITICISMS OF AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES, WHICH CONTINUE TO MAKE HEADLINES IN MANILA.

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7 Jul 72

Central Intelligence Bulletin

8

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